REMARKS

Claims 32-47 and 63 are all the claims pending in the present application. As will be discussed below, Claim 32 has been amended consistent with the Examiners helpful suggestions during the interview conducted July 27, 2006. No new matter has been added. Accordingly, entry of the present Amendment is requested.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the courtesy extended to their undersigned representative during the interview conducted July 27, 2006. The cited reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,108,419 to Reger et al. ("Reger '419")) was discussed in the context of its relevance to Claim 32 of the present Application. As mentioned above, Applicants have amended Claim 32 consistent with the Examiner's helpful suggestions

Claims 32 and 34-41 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Reger '419. Claims 33 and 63 have also been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Reger '419..

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the following reasons.

Reger '419 is relied upon to teach a filter body including a proximal inlet portion, a distal outlet portion, and a filter support frame. The filter body assertedly has varying hardness and stiffness resulting at least in part from a laminate construction of the region such that the part of the filter mesh with a frame portion attached thereto has a greater stiffness than the part of the porous layer of the filter body portion without the frame portion attached thereto. It is asserted that the portion with greater stiffness is thicker than the portion without the frame portion attached thereto.

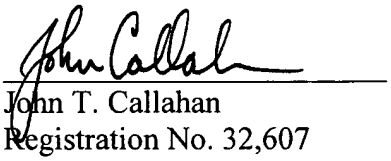
In contrast, Claim 32 recites a collapsible filter element for a transcatheter embolic protection device. The filter element includes a collapsible filter body which is movable between a collapsed stored position for movement through a vascular system and an expanded position for extension across a blood vessel such that blood passing through the blood vessel is delivered through the filter element. A proximal inlet portion of the filter body has one or more inlet openings sized to allow blood and embolic material to enter the filter body; and a distal outlet portion of the filter body is provided having a plurality of outlet openings sized to allow through-passage of blood, but to retain embolic material within the filter body. A filter support frame is provided for supporting the filter body in the expanded position when extended across a blood vessel. The filter body includes laminated regions comprising at least two layers extending along the length of at least two of the regions, the regions comprising varying hardness or stiffness along the length between the two regions resulting from different thickness or materials of the laminated regions.

Reger '419. does not teach or suggest such a filter element. Referring to Fig. 4 of Reger '419, the filter disclosed therein includes a tubular stocking 60, filter 54, peripheral portion 58 and ribs 66. However, Reger et al. does not teach or suggest a filter body including laminated regions comprising at least two layers extending along the length of at least two of the regions, the regions comprising varying hardness or stiffness along the length between the two regions resulting from different thickness or materials of the laminated regions. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections is requested.

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



John T. Callahan
Registration No. 32,607

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE
23373
CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: July 31, 2006